



MEDIA BRIEF

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Federal EDA awards \$6.6 million to WestGate, SIDC to help fund 60,000 s.f. WestGate conference and training center

Lauded by state technology university leaders, the new facility is expected to include a business incubator, academic engagement

WESTGATE @ CRANE TECHNOLOGY PARK, Indiana – Opening the way to an entirely new round of regional development, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce has formally awarded a \$6.6 million grant to the WestGate @ Crane Authority and the Southern Indiana Development Commission (SIDC). The grant will help fund a 60,000 sq. ft. two-story conference center and business incubator that will include training facilities, office space and room for academic institutional engagement, according to Kent Parisien, president of the WestGate Authority.

"While the formal funding announcement of the Academy is exciting enough, we expect that this new critical addition is but the 'tip of the iceberg' in terms of creating vibrant synergy to attract a hotel developer and operator, new retail space and other long-awaited amenities for the WestGate," Parisien said. "This new facility will change a lot of things, and it will push the already-successful park to a new level."

According to the announcement by Gary Locke, U.S. Secretary of Commerce, the WestGate project is expected to create 255 jobs and generate \$10.87 million in private investment.

"This EDA grant will create jobs in the tri-county area by helping entrepreneurs leverage existing local resources to create new businesses and support regional economic growth," Locke said.

Additional funding for the project, which is expected to total more than \$8 million, will come from the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), WestGate Authority funds, and the Daviess County Economic Development Foundation.

Parisien said that the funding was achieved through intense support from a variety of state and local partners, including IEDC and the Indiana Office of Rural and Community Development (OCRA). Noting that the funding amount for a single rural project was "unusual" for the EDA, Parisien noted that "a great deal of thanks needs to go to Greg Jones and his staff at the Southern Indiana Development Commission. They really went the extra mile on this one."

The nearby \$2 billion Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) conducts technology and research symposia around the country, as well as several training activities for vendors and technology partners. Parisien said that the presence of a new WestGate conference center and hotel will likely bring "many of those high-end conferences and training sessions back here to southern Indiana, particularly when I-69 opens next to the park."

Vic Lechtenberg, vice provost of engagement for Purdue University, said that the WestGate had already become more attractive to university and technology engagement through the previous development of more than 100,000 sq. ft. of new technology facilities and the presence of numerous major commercial defense companies.

"This new WestGate Academy will likely open fresh opportunities for university-level involvement in defense technology research and development, which will bring new national attention to the region," Lechtenberg continued. "While the development of the WestGate Academy is certainly a good one for the local region, it is also good for the advancement of commercial defense growth across the state."

The Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, a top-ranked private engineering school located in Terre Haute (Indiana), has maintained a graduate engineering program on the NSWC Crane base for several years.

"We expect that the presence of this new WestGate Academy facility will create new and expanded opportunities for university engagement with the defense companies currently in the WestGate, NSWC Crane contract programs and communities in the region," said William Kline, director of Rose-Hulman Ventures. Dr. Kline, also Associate Dean of Professional Experiences at Rose-Hulman and professor of engineering management for the Institute, coordinated the graduate Rose-Hulman academic program at NSWC Crane for several years.

"This is great news for WestGate, great news for the state's commercial defense industry, and great news for the Crane region in southwest Indiana," said Mark Messmer, Indiana State Representative (District 63) and leader of the Crane Caucus in the Indiana General Assembly. "This will be a most important project that will open the door for many other projects."

A ground-breaking date for the new facility is expected to be set in late fall and active construction is expected to begin before the end of the year, according to Parisien.

The WestGate park is presently home to technology operations of major defense companies like SAIC, URS, CACI, ITT, CSC, Raydar & Associates, Novonics, NAVMAR, Stimulus Engineering and Technical Services Corporation (TSC), as well as other technology companies.

The park is also expected to benefit from growth associated with the 2012 opening of I-69 in the region. The new Interstate will pass within a few miles of the WestGate, and a new traffic ramp located near the park is expected to increase commercial logistics operations in the region.

More than 275 new high-technology positions have been created in the WestGate in the past few years. Total employment in the park now exceeds 400 employees.

About WestGate@Crane Technology Park

Qualified as a state Certified Technology Park (CTP) by the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), the WestGate @ Crane Technology Park represents a natural marketplace for defense contractors currently providing technical support, and research and development services to the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Crane Division in southern Indiana. Operations of the \$2 billion URS corporation, and SAIC, the nation's 7th largest defense contractor, in addition to ITT, CACI, CSC, Raydar & Associates, Novonics, NAVMAR, Stimulus Engineering and Technical Services Corporation (TSC), already maintain operations in the park. For more information, please visit www.westgatecrane.com. For media inquiries, please contact Michael Snyder at The MEK Group: 317-805-4870 or e-mail: msnyder@themekgroup.com